

Dear [NAME],

Spring is finally here, and I hope you're able to get outside and enjoy the warmer weather.

Despite the pandemic, the crucial work of our volunteers continues at the St. Michael's Hospital Foundation, and we are grateful. In honour of National Volunteer Week, April 18-24, we're spotlighting just a few of our relentless volunteers. Read on for their stories.

April 18-24 is also National Organ and Tissue Donation Awareness Week. Below, meet two kidney patients whose lives have been transformed thanks to the selflessness of organ donors and the talents of our health providers. St. Michael's has been Canada's leading kidney transplant and care centre for over 50 years, and our clinicians and scientists have pioneered procedures that have changed the lives of those suffering from kidney disease. We are now building a new Kidney Transplant and Care Centre at St. Michael's, thanks to our incredible donor community. You can [donate](#) or learn more about our OneFocus campaign [here](#).

This is an exciting time here at the Foundation. On April 1, we officially merged with the Providence Healthcare Foundation. (Providence Healthcare, which provides rehabilitation, palliative care, long-term care and community programs, and St. Michael's are both part of Unity Health Toronto, along with St. Joseph's Health Centre.) I'm excited by the possibilities of what we can accomplish together, and I extend a warm welcome to the Providence donor community in our shared mission to create a better care experience for our patients at every stage of their health-care journey.

With spring here and the vaccination program well underway, we're feeling optimistic, even as we keep an eye on the virus variants. As our teams continue to vaccinate at our in-hospital clinic, they are also vaccinating high-risk populations, among them those experiencing homelessness and Indigenous people living in remote communities. You can keep up to date on our efforts by visiting our [COVID-19 Information Hub](#).

On behalf of the Foundation, I wish those who celebrate Easter, Passover or Ramadan a joyous holiday and to everyone, good health.

Sincerely,



Lili Litwin
President, St. Michael's Hospital Foundation

CELEBRATING VOLUNTEER WEEK



A BELOVED VOLUNTEER'S LEGACY.

For two years Colin Irving was a volunteer in our Emergency Department, helping and comforting patients, especially those experiencing disadvantage. After Colin died, a gift from his estate supported a navigator to guide patients experiencing homelessness through their health-care journey and to help provide them with food, clothing and reassurance.

[Read More](#)

WHY VOLUNTEER AT ST. MICHAEL'S?

Gwen Harvey joined the St. Michael's Foundation Board in 2014, and now serves as co-chair of the Research Innovation Council and [Angels Den](#) (which takes place November 18, 2021). "Volunteering with St. Mike's has been such a fulfilling experience," she says. "The 'stop at nothing' culture permeates the hospital's patient care, its resilience throughout COVID-19 and its research ingenuity. As a volunteer, I have always felt supported and because of that, I, along with my co-chair Melissa Martin, have been able to create and build Angels Den and the [Research Innovation Council](#). Volunteers can have compelling ideas, but when you have the support to implement them, they become reality."

Martine Irman is a member of the [Power Circle](#), a group of female philanthropists who support St. Michael's Hospital. "I saw it as a fantastic opportunity to make an impact on women's causes at St. Michael's Hospital," she says. "We have a remarkable opportunity to drive change, support medical research and help transform patient care. There's no limit to what we, as women, can accomplish by working together."

Jeremy Rogers joined St. Michael's Young Leaders in February 2020, and has become one of the top SMYL fundraisers for our Courage Fund, which supports St. Michael's COVID-19 efforts. His Fundraise Your Way effort raised more than \$2,000 from viewers who watched a live stream in which Jeremy let his roommate cut his hair. "St. Michael's captured my interest because it helps at-risk communities," he says. "The pandemic has shown us how vital the health-care field is in ensuring our safety regardless of age, race or gender. It's rewarding to work with an organization that believes in these values."

NATIONAL ORGAN AND TISSUE DONATION AWARENESS WEEK

A KIDNEY PATIENT'S WISH COMES TRUE.

"Testing is such a roller coaster of emotion," says kidney transplant patient Joanna Holland. "I couldn't believe how many people were coming forward for me, and the disappointment when there was no match. I was floored when Jeanette came forward. Now she's part of the family — and my angel."

[Read More](#)



AN ONLY-AT-ST. MIKE'S KIDNEY TRANSPLANT PROCEDURE TRANSFORMS A PATIENT'S LIFE.

"There are people who are selfless and want to do something meaningful for others," says kidney recipient Lisa Munro. "To suddenly give an organ to someone you're not related to is unfathomable, and I get emotional talking about it."

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50+ YEARS OF PIONEERING KIDNEY CARE

1969

First kidney transplant at St. Michael's Hospital.

2000

First in Ontario to use minimally invasive surgery on kidney donors.

2011

First in North America where patients received a kidney from a donor with a different blood type.

2015

First in Canada to perform kidney auto-transplant using robotic surgery.

2019

First in the world to use painless imaging rather than needle biopsies to assess kidney scarring.

2021

Work begins on the new Kidney Transplant and Care Centre, thanks to donor support

STAY INFORMED

Visit our [COVID-19 information page](#) for regular updates on how St. Michael's is responding to COVID-19, and follow our social channels below.



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